DUXBURY HISTORY FILE
REFERENCE

Maritime School seeks $1.5 million

DUXBURY — The Duxbury Bay Maritime School began its "Connect With the Bay" fund-raising campaign last week with the hope of raising $1.5 million to rebuild its pier and increase capacity.

The improvements would allow for year-round sailing, high school sailing and handicapped sailing. School officials hope to begin work this fall and complete the renovations by next spring.

The current campaign represents the second phase of the fund-raising plan. The first phase raised $3.6 million to purchase the land and building next to the town wharf and a fleet of sailboats and other vessels.

Phase III will fund the construction of a larger classroom and administration building as well as more boat storage space.

Expansion is in the offing at Maritime School

Planned project would double docking capacity

By TOM BENSON
The Patriot Ledger

DUXBURY

DUXBURY — With interest in the Duxbury Bay Maritime School growing even faster than the school's founders hoped, the year-old school is planning to expand its docking area.

The expansion would reflect one of the school's goals: reclaiming waterfront property.

The next planned move is rebuilding the docking area, or guzzle, on the south side of its property, next to the town landing. The work would double the school's docking capacity and improve the rundown area, according to school officials.

"Anytime we get waterfront redevelopment, that's always a positive thing, and it provides additional public access," Town Planner Thomas Broadrick said. "We want kids to be out there learning to sail."

A drive to raise money for rebuilding the guzzle will begin in earnest in September, according to Ned Lawson, now the school's executive director and one of the founders. The school hopes to raise $1.3 million to rebuild the dock area and $200,000 for additional programming.

At the moment, most of the school's vessels are moored on floats in the bay, which can make them hard to get to. The new guzzle would allow boats to be moored closer to land and provide more access to the boats in the bay.

"That will enable us to do a lot of new and innovative programs — for example, a program for handicapped sailors," Lawson said. "It will enable us to develop a high school sailing program in the spring and fall."

Lawson hopes Duxbury High School will be able to start a sailing program next spring; other high schools could follow. The new docking area also would allow winter sailing lessons.

The Maritime School, a private, non-profit organization, gets most of its clients from Duxbury and surrounding towns, Lawson said. A handful, usually children staying with local grandparents, come from out of state.

"I thought there would be a demand," Lawson said. "What surprised most people was the level of that demand. A lot of it came faster than we originally thought possible."

It was just over a year ago that a group of residents bought 2¼ acres next to the town landing with the hope of bringing more people out onto Duxbury Bay. The former warehouse now used as the school was for sale.

The school's founding group wanted to make sure the land was used for bay access rather than as the location for a restaurant or an office building, Lawson recalled.

"That would have had a negative impact on this part of the town and forever prevented access from this spot," Lawson said.

With a lot of help from the Ellison Foundation, the school raised more than $1 million to buy the land, the building and 60 sailboats. After buying the land in April 1998, the school opened that summer and offered sailing lessons to 472 children and adults.

This year, the offerings have been expanded to include marine ecology classes and a wooden boatbuilding class for children. More than 600 people have attended programs so far this summer, and people are still being enrolled in a September sailing course, Lawson said.

People interested in classes or supporting the school can call (781) 935-7555.